J.V. operation of coal mining units with private sector

794. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that more than one dozen small coal mining units in different States are operating through joint venture with the private sector while the Bill for privatisation of coal mining is awaiting Parliamentary approval; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL) : (a) and (b) The Central Electricity Supply Corporation (CESC) and the West Bengal Power Development Corporation (WBPDCL) and the West Bengal State Electricity Board (WBSEB) jointly are doing coal mining in the Sarashatoli block and the Tara (East and West) blocks in the State of West Bengal, respectively through their joint venture companies namely Integrated Coal Mining Limited (ICML) and the Bengal Emta Coal Mines Limited (BEML). The coal mined by M/s. ICML from Sarashatoli mine is used by CESC in their power plants whereas the coal mined from Tara (East and West) by M/s. BEML is used by the WBPDCL and WBSEB in their power plants for power generation. M/s. CESC hold 26% of the voting equity in ICML, whereas M/s. WBPDL and M/s. WBSEB jointly hold 26% of the voting equity in BEML. No other joint venture company has been given mining lease to operate coal mines. Captive mining of coal by the above joint venture companies for power generation is in conformity with the provisions of the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973.

Closing down of ECL mines

795. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that at least 26 mines in Eastern Coalfields are to be closed down on ground of unviability;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and